

# MISSION MARKET

103 Jericho Turnpike, Floral Park, NY

## About Mission Market

Mission Market—a retail shop and transitional work environment operated by individuals with autism is a project of Quality Services for the Autism Community (QSAC). As part of QSAC's larger vocational training initiative, Mission Market provides a supportive work environment for individuals with developmental disabilities to improve their vocational, communication, and socialization skills in a community-based setting. The program is unique in that it is a work-based learning environment that is open to the public.

All of the products sold by Mission Market are made by individuals with autism enrolled in QSAC's day habilitation programs or day schools. As part of their vocational skills training, students and day habilitation participants learn how to make greeting cards, soaps, candles, and other craft products—showcasing their talents, skills, and interests.

QSAC's vocational skills development program and transitional work environments help individuals with an autism spectrum disorder develop valuable professional skills while realizing the personal satisfaction associated with the creation of an end product. Through these programs, individuals learn about using design tools, product production, quality assurance, marketing, sales, and overall business operations.

All of the proceeds from the products sold are reinvested back into the vocational skills training programs.

Mission Market and the transitional work environment project are made possible with funding from The Taft Foundation, The PIMCO Foundation, The FAR Fund, and The Hyde and Watson Foundation.

## About QSAC

Founded more than forty years ago, QSAC is a non-profit organization that provides services to more than 2,500 children and adults with autism. With over 30 unique programs throughout Manhattan, Queens, the Bronx, and Long Island, QSAC is dedicated to its mission to support children and adults with autism in achieving greater independence, realizing their future potential, and contributing to their communities in a meaningful way. QSAC pursues this mission through direct services that provide a supportive and individualized setting for children and adults with autism to improve their communication, socialization, academic, and functional skills.

Visit [www.qsac.com](http://www.qsac.com) for more information.



## Learn More!

Visit [www.shopmissionmarket.com](http://www.shopmissionmarket.com) to learn more about Mission Market, view store hours, and place orders online.

**QSAC**  
Quality Services for the Autism Community  
Serving New York City and Long Island

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What inspired the creation of Mission Market?

Over the years, QSAC has worked with an array of partners to provide individuals in our programs with access to workplace learning opportunities. While we appreciate all of our partners, these opportunities are often limited due to both time and the quality of the accommodations and supports that are able to be offered. It's with this understanding that we came to found Mission Market. Like other employment or job sites we have partnered with, Mission Market is community-based, but it's also so much more than that — with the help of QSAC's clinical and program teams, and since Mission Market is our own space, we have developed a truly person-centered work environment.

Through an array of task analyses, visual cues, and other aids, we have been able to ensure ideal conditions for supporting the individuals in our program. We have also created a work environment that can be visited by employers who are interested in understanding what accommodations and systems they may be able to put in place to ensure the success of individuals with autism working at their company.

## How many individuals with autism are involved in the storefront?

Currently, eight individuals work in the storefront itself. They do a variety of jobs ranging from cashier to stocking shelves. Each job in the storefront is assigned an array of tasks that are directly aligned with task analyses.

In addition to the storefront, individuals across our programs are involved with all facets of managing the store. Whether through sharing their creativity and creating items to be sold or managing the website and social media, the storefront has created a number of vocational learning opportunities. Across the organization, more than 80 individuals contribute to the store's operations in some way.

## What types of skills are individuals learning in the store?

Individuals are learning an array of skills ranging from stocking, customer relations, packing and mailing, and how to take inventory to running a cash register and processing credit card payments. Individuals working in the store are also exposed to opportunities to learn about social media, web design, graphic design, and marketing. For individuals who may be interested in managing money, the store is a great way to learn about money management, budgeting, and tracking sales. The store also provides opportunities for individuals who are interested in learning and practicing custodial skills. On a global level, individuals participating in the storefront will learn and practice important customer service and interpersonal communication skills.

## What types of skills are individuals learning who create the products being sold in the store?

All of the items sold in the store are handmade by transition-age students and adults with autism. Through the creation of original items, individuals are learning and practicing a variety of skills. Specifically, individuals learn about staying on task, following visual and written instructions, following customer orders to create specific styles, team and group work, and wearing a uniform. All of these competencies are important to an individual's well-rounded development of prevocational and vocational skills.

Individuals also learn an array of task-specific skills including mixing, assembling, measuring, labeling, pouring, working in a group, following directions, sewing, cutting, using a template, tempering product ingredients, and packaging items. Through the development of greeting cards, individuals are also learning critical computer and printing skills, scoring (folding), and mailing skills.

## Is Mission Market open to the public?

Yes, Mission Market is open to the public — spread the word! Initially, we will only be open limited times during the day, but we plan to expand our hours in the future. Please visit our website for hours before visiting.

## How do you track the impact that participation in the storefront is having on individuals?

QSAC's staff take data on a daily basis. Prior to opening the storefront, baseline data was taken for individuals who would be working in the store or supporting the store's operations. By taking this baseline data, we will be able to measure the impact that participation has on an individual working in the program.

## Which programs are involved in the store?

Currently, the store is primarily run by individuals who are in QSAC's Day Habilitation Program; however, beginning in September 2019 transition-age students from our day schools will also be able to use the storefront as a vocational learning site. In addition to staffing the store, students and adults from our schools and day habilitation programs are involved with the production of an array of handmade items.

## Who is responsible for the educational aspects of the storefront and ensures that participants are learning?

There is a Curriculum Coordinator and Job Coach who are both on staff and assigned to the storefront. Together, they work to develop learning opportunities for individuals in the program. The Job Coach also provides on-the-job guidance and support for the individuals working in the store. In addition, the program is overseen by QSAC's Senior Director of Day Services as well as our Director of Clinical Services for Day Habilitation.

## What is the ultimate goal of the program?

The goal of the program is to provide a person-centered environment for learning and practicing prevocational and vocational goals. For some individuals, this may be to prepare them for competitive employment, ACCES-VR, or other job preparation services, while for other individuals their participation in the storefront may represent the realization of their goals.

## What happens to the money generated by the store?

All of the funds are reinvested in the program, so 100% of the proceeds support our job training initiatives. This helps to ensure that we are able to make curriculum updates as well as purchase new tools and aids for supporting individuals.

## How is Mission Market funded?

While we hope to one day be funded by the store's sales, currently Mission Market is primarily funded with the help of QSAC's philanthropic partners including The Taft Foundation, The PIMCO Foundation, The Hyde and Watson Foundation, and the FAR Fund. If you are interested in learning how you can help support this program, please contact Katie Joyner, Director of Development, at [katie.joyner@qsac.com](mailto:katie.joyner@qsac.com) or (212) 244-5560, ext. 2064.

### More Information

For additional information, please contact Joseph Amodeo at [jamodeo@qsac.com](mailto:jamodeo@qsac.com).